For the Record: What you really need to know about Records Management

Desktop training:
What is a record?
What is a non-record?
How can I tell the difference?

TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY
SAN MARCOS
The rising STAR of Texas

A member of The Texas State University System

May 2010
What is a record?

- Recorded information
- In any format
- Created or received in the course of doing business
Examples of Records

- Letters
- Meeting Minutes
- Contracts
- Invoices
- Databases
- Personnel Files
- Metrics & Measurements
What is Records Management?

- The systematic control
- of all organizational records
- throughout the entire life cycle
  of the record
What is a Non-Record?

- No administrative, legal, fiscal, or archival retention requirements

Non-records include:

- Convenience copies*
- Published reference
- Vendor Brochures
- Stocks of publications
- News clippings
- Unsolicited mail
- Blank forms

*Convenience copies become the official record if held longer than RRS
# Record vs. Convenience Copy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Official Record</th>
<th>Convenience Copy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creator = Owner</td>
<td>Distributed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflects a function of your department</td>
<td>Not your department’s function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retain according to RRS</td>
<td>Dispose any time / no approval needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dispose with approval</td>
<td>Keep no longer than RRS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Records Management training is offered each long semester through Professional Development.

Created by K.Toma, University Archivist & Records Manager, May 2010
Examples of Convenience Copies

- Letters . . . when you receive as FYI
- Meeting Minutes . . . on distribution list
- Contracts . . . copy for department use
- Invoices . . . duplicate for budgeting
- Phone lists . . . ongoing - distributed
- UPPS . . . information / reference
Record vs. Convenience Copy

- Convenience copies are **identical** to the original record
  - CCs are not annotated or marked-up
  - CCs do not contain extra information

If a “copy” contains information that is not in the original record, then it is **not a convenience copy** – it is a record.

When in doubt, treat it as a record.
Record vs. Convenience Copy

Example

- **Departmental Billing Detail**
  - Original invoice sent to finance
  - Copy retained in department

If exact duplicate of original = convenience copy
Can destroy at any time, no approval needed.

If receipts are stapled to copy = original record
Retain according to RRS, follow disposition procedures.
Record vs. Convenience Copy

You know your records better than anyone else!

- You will have to determine which is which:
  - Official record
  - Convenience copy
  - Copy that is altered and becomes a record

Take the time to identify records so you can make good decisions about retention.

When in doubt, treat it as a record.
Records Management training is offered each long semester through Professional Development.
Is This a Record?

- Did you create or receive this information to use in conducting University business?

If no, go to next question

If yes, it’s a record
Is This a Record?

• Does it contain information about University functions, operations, events, programs, projects, policies, procedures, decisions, or activities?

If no, go to next question

If yes, it’s a record
Is This a Record?

- Does it fulfill regulatory recordkeeping requirements that are specific to the type of work you do?

If no, go to next question

If yes, it’s a record
Is This a Record?

- Is it an original document related to University business that does not exist elsewhere?

If no, go to next question

If yes, it’s a record
Is This a Record?

- Is it an uncirculated draft?
- Is it an interim document for which a final version exists?

If no, go to next question

Yes  Record
Is This a Record?

- It is a copy of a document, a publication, or correspondence kept only for convenience or reference, on which no action has been taken?

If no, go to next question

Yes

Record
Is This a Record?

- Is it information accumulated and maintained (often for background), but which does not affect or reflect University business?

If no, go to next question

If yes, Record
Is This a Record?

- It is unsolicited mail that has no value to the University?

If no, go to next question

Yes

Record
Is This a Record?

When in doubt, treat it as a record
Reference Files (non-recs)

- Everyone has reference files
- Non-records / convenience copies*
- Usually filed by topic, alphabetically
- Referred to as “Subject” or “Alpha” files
- Used for convenience, reporting, planning

*Review Subject/Alpha files annually to dispose of convenience copies according to RRS
Reference Files (non-recs)

Typical Reference Files:

- Annual Reports / Board Reports
- Research files: statistics, benchmarking, etc.
- Contact lists: pros, vendors, colleagues, etc.
- Professional development materials
- Departmental history: events, awards, etc.
- Vendor information: contact, catalogs, etc.
Reference Files (non-rececs)

- 90-day rule – 98% of use in first 90 days
- OK to keep this year + last year
- Unless statistical or summary, subject files are fairly useless after 3+ years

Don’t file records with non-records
Remember . . .

- When in doubt: **treat it as a record**
- If there are conflicting retention periods: **use the longest retention period**
- If file has multiple records with various retention periods: **use the longest retention period**